

never come - I should be exceedingly glad  
to have them soon.

I send you no more of *Genera* or sale  
at present for I hope to have the third  
part out in the spring - and then we  
shall have this first Polypetalous volume  
with general Addenda and Index put  
in board and I shall send you a few  
copies in hopes of your disposing of  
them.

I was going to send to Mr Gray our  
best wishes for this festive season but  
I recollect all the festivities will be  
over before this arrives however we  
both wish you <sup>both</sup> every happiness and  
success during the ensuing year - Could  
not you come over to the Paris Exhibition  
with Mr Gray? - we hope to go there  
in June. - We are now quietly at home  
since the loss of my own sister and of Mr  
Deakton's sister we have no family gatherings  
except our summer visits to her brother.

Ever yours most sincerely

George Deakton

25, WILTON PLACE,

S.W.

Dec 30/86

My dear Gray

I have desired a copy of the 2<sup>d</sup> vol of my  
*Flora Australiensis* to be sent to Tribner for  
you - I hope it went there yesterday I am very  
anxious to see any critical remarks of yours  
upon it this volume has taken me two  
years hard work it includes the whole of the  
*Ulystaceae* which were exceedingly tedious from  
having to build the ovaries of such a number of  
specimens of every species - and also the whole  
of the *Compositae* in which I have ventured innova-  
tions which I know not what you will say to.  
It seems to have become of late a leading principle  
that wherever the organs of fructification - including  
often bracts and floral leaves - present the slightest  
differences there are always generic not specific only  
leaving for species only the differences in the organs  
of vegetation a principle I cannot agree to. I have  
become more and more convinced that in order to  
distribute organized beings into the best groups and  
subgroups for studying their resemblances and differences  
properties and characters one must never from the  
highest to the lowest lose sight of the principles of the

so called natural as opposed to the artificial method, based always upon a combination of characters, not upon single ones. Another great rule is that the more <sup>W. 2</sup> the grades of subdivision are multiplied the better; each group of each grade to include several but not too many of the grade next below, till you come to individual species. Owing, <sup>however</sup> to our imperfect knowledge or appreciation of Nature, or owing to Nature's refusal to submit to rules, we cannot always subdivide large groups naturally and are then obliged to have recourse to single (or artificial) characters (i.e. artificial subgroups) - but single characters ought not to oblige us to make subgroups when not wanted. Then as to which of the grades should in our system of binomial nomenclature be fixed upon as genera seems to me a matter of convenience - convenience being that which mostly facilitates the arrangement of natural objects in our minds and memories for the sake of study. The genus above all, in my opinion, ought to be natural and where there are several grades of natural groups we ought to take the most natural of the grades, not necessarily nor generally the lowest natural one. Again experience shows us more and more that no one character has an a priori constant value - that which in one group may constantly form natural divisions may, in an adjoining group be of none but specific value. Upon these principles I have been

endeavouring to consolidate into real genera (i.e. groups of several species) the numerous monotypic or almost monotypic genera founded upon minute differences in the pappus etc. which to me are in many cases species only and which have so acceptively complicated the study of *Compositae* & *Umbelliferae* etc. In many cases I know well we cannot avoid monotypic genera but I wage war upon them wherever I can, and I am very anxious for any of your criticisms on what I have done.

Hooker's *Melantonasacra* for *Geaca* are of great value, this need to the printer; the succeeding <sup>polyptalam</sup> ~~transfers~~ are mostly done and I am I believe past the middle of *Umbelliferae*. I shall have many changes to propose in your American ones. *Salim* *linore* must go into *Cepium*. *Tharpium* *corvatum* seems to me to have all the generic character of *Digia* *aurea*. *D. integrissima* is much nearer to *Rupicola* (*Neutera*) *Tharpium* *montanum* is scarcely congener to *T. barbinode* and *T. Walteri*. *Daucormia* seems to me a third species of *Didymopanax* (which is nearly *Psedonoxys* not *Hummeroxys*) and *Stami* *dumifolium* Kun. in *Wall. Cat.* (just opposite them) is I think a fourth. *Edormia* will I think go into one of the numerous sections of *Cavium*. I shall be very much obliged by any thing to assist in which may occur to you.

You mentioned in August that you had some documents and observations on the *Crustacean* Institute to send me - they have